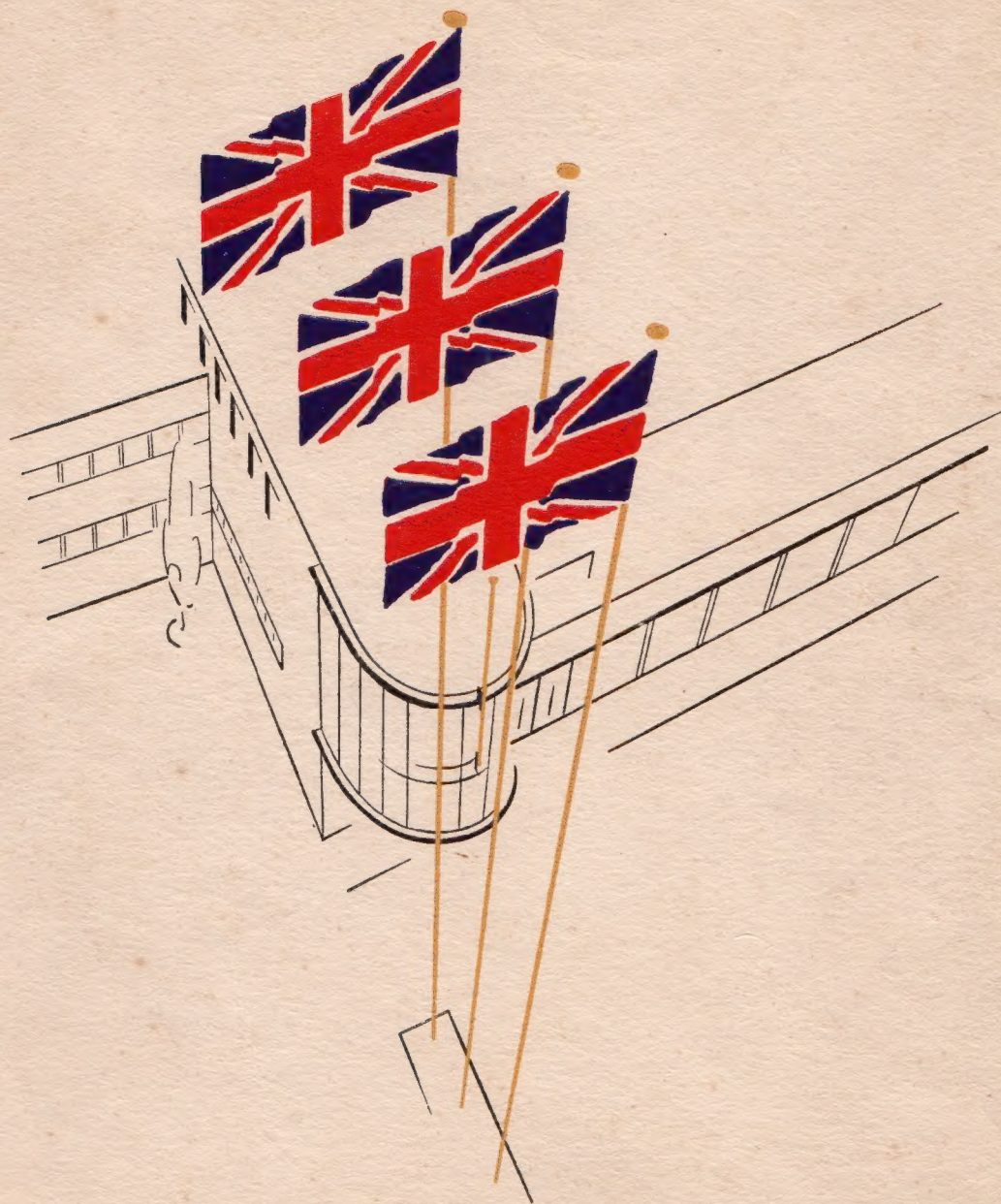


BEXHILL-ON-SEA



CORONATION 1937

**SOUVENIR
PROGRAMME**





BOROUGH OF BEXHILL



THE CORONATION
OF THEIR MAJESTIES
KING GEORGE VI
AND
QUEEN ELIZABETH

12th MAY, 1937



Programme of
Celebrations



W. N. CUTHBERT
MAYOR

S. J. TAYLOR
TOWN CLERK

PROGRAMME PRICE THREEPENCE



The Duke and Duchess of York on the Spiral Staircase at the Pavilion



CORONATION 1937

PROGRAMME

This is the Official Programme of the celebrations to be carried out at Bexhill on the occasion of the Coronation of Their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth at Westminster Abbey on Wednesday, May 12th, 1937.

It is published by authority of the Bexhill Coronation Celebrations Committee for the information and guidance of the inhabitants of the Borough, and gives particulars of the procedure and events arranged to be held in celebration of the Coronation in the town of Bexhill and at Sidley and Little Common.

With the programme of events is incorporated a brief record of Royal visits to the Borough, together with photographs of their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, and it therefore forms an interesting souvenir of the historic occasion.

ROYAL VISITS TO BEXHILL

It is believed that the first Royal visitor to Bexhill was His Majesty King Edward VII, who during a stay at St. Leonards-on-Sea in the 'seventies, came over to Bexhill, then a mere village, to hunt with the East Sussex Foxhounds and the Bexhill Harriers.

H.R.H. Princess Mary Adelaide, Duchess of Teck (Grandmother of King George VI) opened the Kursaal (Bexhill's first place of entertainment on the Sea Front) on Whit Monday, May 25th, 1896.

His Royal Highness the Duke of York (now His Majesty King George VI) opened an extension of the Little Folks' Home, Little Common, on October 22nd, 1930.

His late Majesty King George V and Queen Mary visited Bexhill privately on March 16th, 1935, and inspected the De La Warr Pavilion, then in course of construction.

Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York opened the De La Warr Pavilion on December 12th, 1935.

On two occasions in the summer of 1936 the beach at Cooden afforded a happy playground for the little Princesses, Elizabeth and Margaret.

H.H. Princess Helena Victoria opened the Bexhill Hospital on May 13th, 1933.

H.H. Princess Marie Louise Augusta opened the Church Army Home in Egerton Road, which is named after Her Highness.



The Duke of York Inspecting Guard of Honour of Bexhill Territorials, 1930

THE KING'S FIRST VISIT TO BEXHILL

Ceremony at Little Folks' Home, October 22nd, 1930

King George VI first made the acquaintance of Bexhill on Wednesday, October 22nd, 1930, when as Duke of York, President of the Queen's Hospital for Children, London, he opened an extension of the Hospital's Seaside Branch, the Little Folks' Home, Little Common.

It afforded His Royal Highness much gratification on this occasion when the children of Bexhill took a prominent part in his welcome to the Borough and juvenile patients participated in the ceremony at the Home.

School children gave a hearty greeting to the Royal visitor at the Sea Road Railway Station, and he passed through lines of Boys' and Girls' Life Brigades in Sea Road, Boy Scouts and Cubs in St. Leonards Road, and Girl Guides and Brownies in Devonshire Road, which were on the route of His Royal Highness's journey by car to Little Common.

At the conclusion of the opening ceremony, young people presented purses for the Home to the Duke, and when His Royal Highness kindly joined the little folks for a group photograph he directed that the very small ones should be held up before the camera. When it was suggested that His Royal Highness should come forward he replied : " No, I am going to stand here ; children in front, adults behind."

Bexhill was radiant in autumn sunshine for the reception of its first Royal visitor, who was heartily cheered by the inhabitants as he drove through the decorated streets. Nothing in the proceedings afforded the townspeople greater pleasure than the hope expressed by the Duke that he would have the opportunity of coming to the town again—a hope which was happily fulfilled five years later, when His Royal Highness, accompanied by the Duchess of York, came to open the De La Warr Pavilion.

A gratifying incident at the Little Folks' Home Ceremony was when Lord William Cecil offered congratulations to Her Royal Highness the Duchess of York on the recent birth of a princess (Margaret Rose).

HIS MAJESTY'S SECOND VISIT TO BEXHILL

Opening of the De La Warr Pavilion, December 12th, 1935

His Majesty King George VI's second visit to Bexhill—seventeen months ago—is still fresh in the memory of the inhabitants. Its occasion was the opening of the De La Warr Pavilion, which, following the private visit of his late Majesty King George V and Queen Mary to the building during its construction earlier in the year, further associated the Royal Family with the town's progressive endeavours.

Viewed in retrospect, the event was of even greater historic interest, for within a year of the ceremony the death occurred of King George V, and owing to the abdication of King Edward VIII, his brother succeeded to the Throne and his gracious consort became Queen.

Thursday, December 12th, 1935, was a great day in local history. The townspeople and thousands of other folk who came from neighbouring towns and villages gave the Duke and Duchess of York a warm welcome. Cheering crowds lined the decorated route of their journey through the town, a great mass of people joining in their welcome at the Pavilion, and their departure, after His Royal Highness had praised the character and eulogised the purpose of the new building, and made an inspection of its various features, was accompanied by more remarkable manifestations of loyal feeling and personal regard, as the Duke and Duchess left the Pavilion and passed through a forest of waving hands in Devonshire Road.

It was the first time Bexhill had been honoured by a public visit from a member of the Royal Family, and if those present little thought that they were cheering a future King and Queen, the occasion must give additional interest to the celebration of their Coronation.

Young Bexhill, represented by 400 Guides and Scouts, lined the approaches to the Pavilion, where men and women members of the British Legion and Red Cross Detachments formed a Guard of Honour.

Their Royal Highnesses who, on arriving by electric train from London had lunched at Cooden Beach with the Earl and Countess De La Warr, were received by the Mayor (Col. O. Striedinger, C.B.E., D.S.O.) and the Mayoress (Mrs. Striedinger), and the Deputy Mayor (Councillor W. N. Cuthbert) and Mrs. Cuthbert, and, preceded by the Corporation

Mace Bearer, entered the Pavilion theatre which was crowded by a gathering of members of municipal bodies and burgesses and representatives of neighbouring boroughs.

Everyone was charmed with the gracious smile of the Duchess, who was dressed in black and wore a rope of pearls. The Duke wore a grey suit with double breasted jacket and black tie.

Extending a warm welcome on behalf of the town to the Royal visitors, the Mayor recalled His Royal Highness's visit to the Little Folks' Home five years before and, describing the character and objects of the building, expressed the gratification of Bexhill as a seaside town to the Duke and Duchess of York who, by their presence, were showing a real and lively interest in the development of the amenities of health resorts. "We trust," said his Worship, "that your recollections of this visit will be of so pleasing a character to you that you will on some future occasion again honour us with your presence."

The Royal speech was a warm eulogy of the attractions of the Pavilion and high appreciation of its purpose. He joined in Bexhill's hope that the outlay on such a great undertaking and fine building would be attended by a full measure of success. Bexhill's forethought had covered many forms of public entertainment, and he hoped that the Pavilion would provide suitable recreation for the town and its many visitors.

Looking into the future His Royal Highness foresaw greater opportunities of leisure, for the employment of which the Pavilion would afford many facilities. He hoped that its attractions would be wisely chosen, thus promoting the physical and mental fitness of the people. "This Pavilion," he declared, "offers a wide, full choice of amusement, pleasure and interest to those who wish to use it, thus adding to the common enjoyments of the people."

As a memento of the occasion His Royal Highness was presented with a model of a Martello Tower bearing the Arms of the Borough, by touching which he disclosed the Orchestra on the stage and inaugurated the Pavilion's mission of entertainment.

After the ceremony the Duke and Duchess made a tour of the Pavilion and expressed to the Mayor their delight with its appearance and features.

The Royal Visitors made their departure from Bexhill amid great demonstrations of enthusiasm—outside the Pavilion, in Devonshire Road, and at the Central Railway Station, where the crowd pressed forward to extend a hearty farewell.

The following letter of appreciation from the Duke's Comptroller was received by the Mayor :

" His Royal Highness the Duke of York desires me to write and let you know how pleased he and the Duchess of York were with the very loyal and hearty reception which they received from the inhabitants of your Borough last Thursday. Their Royal Highnesses are well aware how much organisation is required for a short visit such as they paid to Bexhill, and they hope you will convey to the Town Clerk and all others concerned in the arrangements, the appreciation of both their Royal Highnesses of their efforts to make the visit a success. The Duke and Duchess of York were very pleased with the silver replica of the Martello Tower which I have received to-day from the Town Clerk. This will always be an interesting memento of their visit to Bexhill."

KING GEORGE V AND QUEEN MARY AT BEXHILL

March 16th 1935

The only occasion upon which a reigning Sovereign and his Consort have been seen in Bexhill was no less gratifying to the inhabitants because of the purely private and personal nature of the visit.

Very few people were aware that the Borough had been honoured by the presence of His late Majesty King George V and Queen Mary one wet Saturday afternoon until they had come and gone. But the date—March 16th, 1935—has been inscribed in a foremost page of the annals of local history, and the event is one which will always be regarded with feelings of local pride and satisfaction by a Borough which was incorporated in the year when the father of King George V was crowned.

Bexhill owed the distinction to a visit which their Majesties paid to the Mayor and Mayoress (Lord and Lady De La Warr) at their Cooden Beach residence. They were staying at the time at Compton Place, Eastbourne, and made a call on Lord and Lady De La Warr at the Cooden Beach Hotel. In one of the apartments of the hotel was a model of the Pavilion, then in its early stage of construction at Bexhill. In view of their Majesties' interest in the model, Lord De La Warr, with a happy



Queen Mary at Bodiam Castle, 1935



King George V at Battle Abbey, 1935

thought of his Mayoral opportunities, suggested a visit to the site. The proposal was graciously accepted, and arrangements were immediately made for the Royal visit to be extended to Bexhill. As her parents were escorting the King and Queen to their car, Lady Kitty Sackville ran out of the hotel carrying a bunch of violets and, stepping into the car, handed the flowers to Her Majesty. The journey was made via Cooden Drive, and after a hurried preparation the men working on the Pavilion building opened the gates for the admittance of the Royal visitors.

The King and Queen spent 20 minutes looking over the rising walls of Bexhill's Entertainments Hall. They made light of mud and water to get an idea of what the building would be like when finished, and the Queen ascended to the upper part of the great steel frame.

His Majesty took the keenest interest in the works. Informed that the building would be the largest steel-welded erection in the country, he enquired about the merits of this method over those of riveted steel. Noticing some bolts in part of the works, the King wanted to know, as it was a welded steel building, what purpose they served, and was informed that the bolts were to assist in the erection and had no structural value.

The King also engaged one of the welders in conversation.

Apart from the few who happened to be in the vicinity of the Marina, townspeople were unaware of the presence of royalty in their midst. The fortunate ones numbered no more than fifty. Their Majesties returned, by way of Devonshire Road and Western Road and along Cooden Drive, to Cooden Beach, where they continued their journey to Eastbourne.

Public feeling regarding this signal mark of Royal interest was expressed at the time in the following comment :

" Many towns regard it as a high honour when a member of the Royal Family opens a new building which is destined to play an important part in local life. Few, if any, have shared the privilege, now enjoyed by Bexhill, of having a building inspected by the King and Queen while it was in course of erection. The incident is probably unique, and Bexhill may be excused for regarding it as a happy experience which may have a happier sequel."

The hope of a " happier sequel " was fulfilled when the Pavilion was opened later in the year by a Royal couple who were destined to become King and Queen of England.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS



WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY & FRIDAY, 5th, 6th & 7th MAY

Presentation by the Mayor and Mayoress of Souvenir books and new sixpences to children at the Elementary Schools.

SUNDAY, 9th MAY

- 11.15 a.m.** The Mayor and Corporation, accompanied by the Town Band, Fire Brigade, and Ambulance Brigade, will attend Divine Service at St. Peter's Church, the procession leaving the Town Hall at 11 a.m. and proceeding by way of Buckhurst Road and Sea Road
- 3.0 p.m.** United service on the Bexhill Cricket Club ground arranged by the Sidley Committee.

WEDNESDAY, 12th MAY

- 10.15 a.m.** Relay from the De La Warr Pavilion of the broadcast of the Coronation Procession and Ceremony.
- 12 Noon** Firing of the Royal Salute from the old Pavilion Site on the Marina at the foot of Sea Road by the 231st Battery, Royal Artillery (T.) and "B" Company, 5th Battalion (Cinque Ports) Royal Sussex Regiment, in the presence of the Mayor and Corporation. The Mayor will take the salute at the De La Warr Pavilion at the subsequent march past.

1.30 p.m. The following events organised by the Little Common Committee will take place at the Little Common Recreation Ground :

Sports for Children.

Tea with Coronation Mugs.

Adult Sports, including obstacle races, tilting the bucket, bowling for pig.

Side shows.

2.30 p.m. The Mayor will unveil the foundation stone of the Bexhill Amateur Athletic Club's new headquarters on the site of the St. Stephen's Mission Hall, The Down.

3.0 p.m. Procession arranged by the Bexhill Motor Traders representative of all prominent organisations within the Borough, including the following :

231st Field Battery R.A. (T.).

The Town Band.

Fire Brigade.

Bexhill Division, St. John Ambulance Brigade.

Boy Scouts.

Girl Guides, etc., etc.

Miss Garner of the Bexhill Riding School will head the procession.

Assembly outside the Down School at 2.30 p.m sharp, proceeding by way of London Road, Station Road, Central Station, Sea Road, Marina, Devonshire Road, Western Road, Sackville Road, West Parade, Brockley Road, to the Polegrove, where judging will take place at 4.15 p.m. A decorated procession organised by the Sidley Committee will link up at London Road ; leaving the County School at 2 p.m.

The Decorated competitive entries are as follows :

Decorated Private Cars, Lorries, Motor Cycles and Cycles.

Tableaux on Lorry.

Team Horse-drawn Vehicles.

Equestrian Groups.

Equestrian and Pedestrians in National and Character Costumes.

Separate classes for Adults and Children under 16 years.

At least two prizes to each class according to the number of entries.

Special Prize : Most original Costume introducing Grotesque Head.

Prizes will be presented by the Mayoress.

7.0 p.m. Music at the De La Warr Pavilion by the Municipal Orchestra under the direction of Mr. Reginald Whitehouse.

8.30 p.m. Carnival Dance at the De La Warr Pavilion arranged by the
to Combined Sports Clubs, including Fancy Dress Parade at

2.0 a.m. 9.30 p.m. : Cecil Sapseid's " Savona " Band.

Dance music will be relayed to the Pavilion Terraces, etc.

Admission : Main Hall 2s. 6d., Lecture Hall, etc., 1s., Balcony (for spectators) 1s.

8.30 p.m. Carnival Dance organised by the Little Common Committee at the British Legion Hall, Little Common.

10.15 p.m. Display of fireworks from the Colonnade Lawns. Admission to Pavilion Terraces and roof garden 6d.

THURSDAY, 13th MAY

10.30 a.m. Special film display at the Playhouse, Western Road, for scholars from the Elementary Schools and children from local charitable institutions, when the following pictures will be shown :

The film of the Coronation Ceremony.
" The House of Windsor."
Jessie Matthews in " Head over Heels."

2.30 p.m. Tour of junior elementary school children to Eastbourne and Hastings.

5.30 p.m. Adults and Children's Sports in the Bexhill Cricket Club ground, arranged by the Sidley Committee.

7.0 p.m. Fancy dress procession around Sidley, arranged by the Sidley Committee, and dancing in the Bexhill Cricket Club ground. Music by Mr. G. Ransom's dance band. Presentation of prizes by the Mayor at 9 p.m.

FRIDAY, 14th MAY

10.30 a.m. Special film display at the Playhouse, Western Road, for scholars from the Elementary Schools and children from local charitable institutions, when the following pictures will be shown :

The film of the Coronation Ceremony.
" The House of Windsor."
Jessie Matthews in " Head over Heels."

1.0 p.m. Old Folks' Dinner at the Drill Hall, The Down, arranged by the R.A.O.B. Music by Mr. Fred Forward's Orchestra. Entertainment arranged by Mr. J. Morley. Tea at 5.30 p.m. Prizes will be given to the oldest lady and oldest gentleman.

SATURDAY, 15th MAY

10.0 a.m. Silver spoon bowls drive in the Polegrove, arranged by the Bowling Clubs.

Morning session, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. 4 spoons. 15 ends.

Afternoon session, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. 4 spoons. 15 ends.

Evening session, 5 p.m. to dusk. 4 spoons. 15 ends.

Open to all bowlers, ladies and gentlemen.

Entrance fee 6d. each game.

1.0 p.m. Show of poultry, pigeons, rabbits and children's pets at the Colonnade arranged by the Bexhill and District Fanciers' Society. A Coronation spoon will be given to every child exhibitor in children's classes and a silver spoon in the poultry, pigeon, and rabbit classes. Exhibits to be at the Show by 9.30 a.m. and not to be removed until 8 p.m. Admission free.

2.30 p.m. Sports Meeting in Egerton Park, arranged by Bexhill Amateur Athletic Club. Six events, chiefly handicaps, by Club members, ranging from the 100 yards to the one mile race. Also Novices' open races—quarter mile and mile. 220-yards race for boys under 14. 440-yards race for boys age 15-16. Two events by the Bexhill Wheelers. A Gymnastic Display by the Athletic Club. Obstacle race and a Burlesque of an "All-in" Wrestling match. Two hour programme. Admission—Adults 6d. ; Children under 14, 3d.

2.45 p.m. Variety Entertainment for senior school children at the De La Warr Pavilion, arranged by the Bexhill Amateur Theatrical Society (B.A.T.S.).

8.15 p.m. Variety Entertainment at the De La Warr Pavilion, arranged by the "B.A.T.S." Admission 2s. 6d., 1s. 6d., 1s. and 9d.

MONDAY, 17th MAY

10.0 a.m. Bexhill Horse Show in Polegrove, arranged by Bexhill Horse Show Committee. £190 in prizes. 11 Silver Cups. 29 Classes, including many gymkhana events. Admission, Adults 1s. 3d., Children 6d. For full details, see special posters, or apply to Hon. Secretary, Ralph H. Burstow, 43 Station Road, Bexhill.

4.0 p.m. Inter-Club Regatta arranged by the Bexhill Rowing Club. Clubs competing—Eastbourne, Hastings and Bexhill. Races to be rowed :

“ A ” and “ B ” Fours.

“ A ” and “ B ” Pairs.

(“ A ” being members having won a race at a Coast Regatta.)

(“ B ” being members not having won a race at a Coast Regatta.)

A Coronation Cup will be presented to the Club obtaining the highest aggregate of points, and medals will be given to winning crews. The points obtained will count towards the “ Gardner ” Cup, which will be won by the Club gaining most points in the series of Regattas.

The presentation of Cup and Medals to take place at conclusion of Regatta at the Boathouse.

8.30 p.m. Carnival Dance at the De La Warr Pavilion, arranged by the Combined Sports Clubs. Cecil Sapseid's “ Savona ”

1.30 a.m. Band. Admission : Main Hall, 2s. 6d. ; Lecture Hall, etc., 1s. ; Balcony (for spectators), 1s.



Egerton Park, Town Hall, De La Warr Pavilion and Bexhill Hospital will be illuminated by floodlamps during Celebration Week.

